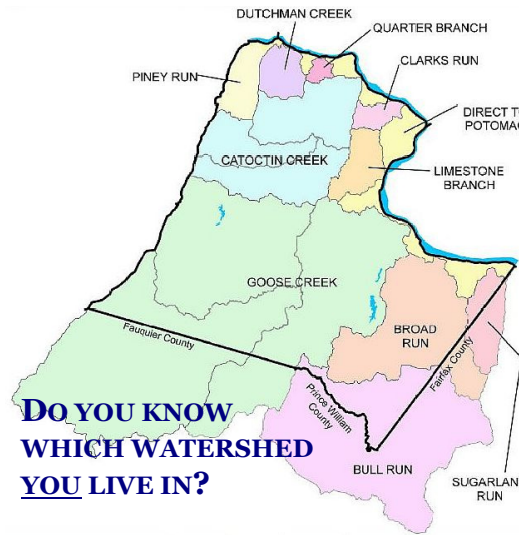


HOW DOES ALL OF THIS AFFECT ME?

- Planning and managing to protect our county's resources is not something government can do alone. As a stakeholder you can support this planning effort both countywide and in your community. Your ideas, energy, talents and expertise are needed to make the planning process successful and to put specific actions in place.
- Through watershed planning, stakeholders work together to ensure that we and our children will have an adequate supply of safe drinking water. Many of Loudoun's streams are already designated "impaired", meaning they do not meet state and federal water quality standards. Only through planning and action can we restore our streams to proper health and make them safe for fishing and swimming.
- Together stakeholder groups can plan for healthy communities that protect our quality of life and our property values.
- Watershed planning leads to an action plan for prevention. Not acting could lead to high costs for restoration of degraded streams and water bodies, expensive cleanup projects, and stormwater retrofits.
- Together, stakeholders can work to protect our county's valuable natural resources that offer aesthetic beauty, home for native plants and wildlife, outdoor recreational opportunities, and support tourism while helping to protect the quality of our water.



DO YOU KNOW WHICH WATERSHED YOU LIVE IN?

Most people don't.

Do you know where the runoff from your property goes? Or, if you live in one of Loudoun's towns or in the suburbs – do you know what's at the other end of the storm drain inlet and pipe? Many believe stormwater is treated at a waste treatment plant. Actually the storm drain pipe empties into a stream probably at the edge of your neighborhood. So, whatever contaminants enter the storm inlet eventually end up in our streams and reservoirs.

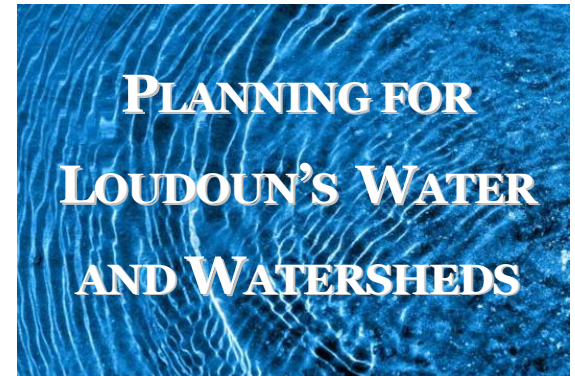
Strategic Watershed Management Solutions

For More Information visit our web page at:
<http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d/watershed.htm>

Or call: Bruce McGranahan - (703) 737-8511 or
Kelly Baty - (703) 771-5390

"When the well is dry, we know the worth of water."

-Benjamin Franklin, (1706-1790),
Poor Richard's Almanac, 1746



WHAT IS A "WATERSHED"?

A watershed is all of the land area that drains to a given body of water – stream, river, lake, or even the Chesapeake Bay.

The boundary of the watershed typically follows the hilltops or ridgelines. Rainfall that doesn't soak into the ground flows over the land eventually finding its way into our streams and rivers. As it travels to its destination runoff may infiltrate into the groundwater; or pick up sediment, pesticides, nutrients, heavy metals or bacteria from pets, livestock, wildlife, or leaking septic systems. These contaminants are often transported into our streams.

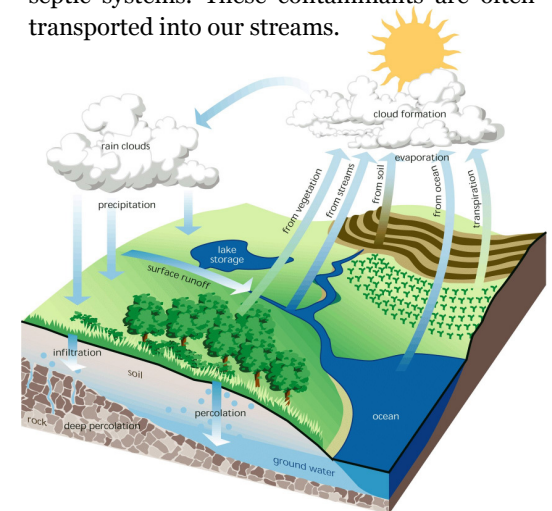


Image from "Stream Corridor Restoration: Principles, Processes, and Practices, 10/98, by the Federal Interagency Stream Restoration Working Group (FISRWG)."



WHAT IS “STRATEGIC WATERSHED MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS”?

The *Strategic Watershed Management Solutions* or “SWMS” was a process used to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to develop a shared vision and strategy for Loudoun County’s watershed planning. Through a series of meetings in the spring of 2006, the stakeholder group developed a common vision, principles, values, and goals that will be the framework for guiding future watershed planning in Loudoun County.

WHAT IS WATERSHED PLANNING?

Watersheds provide logical management units for analysis of water. Action plans can be tailored to individual watersheds with input from the local residents. Because different watersheds have unique characteristics - land use patterns, soils, geology and landscape – and differing needs and attitudes of its residents, there is no “one size fits all”. Using watersheds as the planning framework has proved to be an effective approach to protecting drinking water supplies and natural resources. Data collection and planning on a watershed scale gives us a baseline of current conditions and helps define specific action steps we can take to protect our water environment.



HOW DOES WATERSHED PLANNING INVOLVE CITIZENS?

A collaborative watershed planning process brings citizens, stakeholder groups, business leaders, community organizations; and federal, state and local government together to work toward a common vision for their watersheds. The ideas, creativity, talents, expertise and energy of a diverse stakeholder group is what makes the planning process successful and ensures the plan will result in positive actions.

Watershed management needs citizens and other stakeholders to do volunteer monitoring, education and outreach, and encourage positive watershed activities. As a participant in the planning process you have an active voice in protecting and restoring natural resources that are important to you and your community.

Although the majority of individuals feel that good water quality is important, most don’t understand how their actions affect it or believe they can have a positive affect on water quality. Watershed planning helps citizens better understand the connection between their activities and the health of their watersheds and drinking water.

“Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children’s lifetime. The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land.”

- Luna Leopold

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF WATERSHED PLANNING?

- Watershed planning benefits natural resources by identifying potential conservation areas that help protect water quality while providing high-quality recreational experiences.
- Watershed planning benefits communities by involving residents in developing a vision for the future of their own watershed.
- Watershed planning benefits the environment by improving drinking water quality and supply, protecting wildlife habitat, and helping to control flooding by restoring stream buffers and wetlands.

DOES WATERSHED PLANNING MAKE GOOD ECONOMIC SENSE?

- Partnering is a cost-effective way to share tasks and responsibilities that support local government efforts.
- Prevention and planning are always more cost-effective than expensive retrofits or restoration programs.
- Polluted “source” water is more expensive to treat so clean streams, rivers and reservoirs help hold down the costs of our drinking water.
- Watershed planning helps decision-makers target where limited resources will have the most benefit.
- A watershed plan means access to grants and other funding sources.
- Healthy watersheds, clean drinking water, and a safe environment are good for property values and the local economy.